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Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union

Letter dated 11 December 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I wish to apprise you of the Secretariat's efforts relating to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 60/1 (2005 World Summit Outcome), in which Member States broadly addressed themselves to meeting the special needs of Africa and agreed to the development and implementation of a 10-year plan for capacity-building with the African Union.

In furtherance of the 2005 World Summit Outcome, Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, and I signed in Addis Ababa, on 16 November 2006, a Declaration entitled "Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation: Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union" (see annex). The signing of the Declaration was the outcome of extensive consultations between the African Union Commission and United Nations agencies and departments. The United Nations side included the Economic Commission for Africa, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the Special Adviser for Africa and other United Nations field presences at the African Union (AU).

The Declaration builds on previous agreements between the United Nations and the African Union and the Organization of African Unity before it. It reflects the common commitment of the United Nations and the African Union to maintaining peace and human security, promoting human rights and post-conflict reconstruction and advancing Africa's development and regional integration. Finally, it provides a holistic framework for United Nations system-wide support to the capacity-building efforts of the AU Commission and African subregional organizations (the regional economic communities).

Both sides have agreed on strategic priorities and political aspects of the United Nations-African Union relationship within the framework of the 10-year programme of cooperation, based on African Union priorities and United Nations comparative advantage. They also determined United Nations programmatic

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priorities and goals with respect to United Nations interaction with the African Union, including, but not limited to, capacity-building.

Members of the United Nations team also agreed on United Nations representation at the African Union and coordination of United Nations assistance to the African Union. I should like to inform you that, on that occasion, Mr. Konaré, while welcoming existing United Nations-African Union cooperation, expressed very strong views about the need for the United Nations and other partners to act in ways that would enhance and promote African integration, including by helping the AU Commission to become a "real executive body". Mr. Konaré emphasized that if the African Union had the capacity to undertake certain tasks on the African continent, it would unburden the United Nations.

I should like to draw your attention to the fact that United Nations-African Union cooperation within the framework of the 10-year capacity-building programme covers a much broader spectrum than that which existed between the United Nations and the defunct Organization for African Unity. As the scope of AU activities has increased, so have the needs for United Nations assistance. For the objectives outlined in the Addis Ababa Declaration to be achieved, adequate funding will be essential. In this context, I would like to solicit your support and that of the General Assembly as a whole for its endorsement and the legislative authority for its implementation. I would also like to request the Assembly to consider providing, as needed, additional resources that may be required by the Secretariat and other United Nations agencies engaged with the African Union in the fulfilment of the objectives defined by the World Summit with respect to meeting the special needs of Africa.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

Annex

DECLARATION

ENHANCING UN-AU COOPERATION: FRAMEWORK FOR THE TEN-YEAR CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR THE AFRICAN UNION

We, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, united in our commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security and the enhancement of development on the African continent, and desiring, for that purpose, to develop stronger relationship between our two organizations by establishing a basis for expanding and strengthening consultations and cooperation between our respective secretariats, have agreed to the following in furtherance of the Cooperation Agreement between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity of 9 October 1990.

1. In view of the persistent needs of the African Union to address the peace and security situation in Africa, we underscore the importance of cooperation between the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) in promoting international peace and security on the African continent, especially programmes and activities that take into account the special needs of Africa, which was reaffirmed by the 2005 World Summit Outcome. To this end, cognizant of the grave toll conflict is taking in many parts of Africa, we undertake to focus our efforts, with priority, on conflict prevention, mediation and good offices, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We have together identified key areas for collaboration in these sectors so to build the capacity of the African Union and ensure that our organizations work effectively together to meet the challenges to peace and security in Africa.

2. Bearing in mind the wide range of fundamental challenges facing Africa, and pursuant to the World Summit Outcome, we further undertake to deepen and broaden the cooperation between our two organizations, as appropriate, through consultations between us and senior officials, and talks at the staff level, as well as through the implementation of the projects/programmes within the context of the evolving Framework for the Ten Year Capacity Building Programme for the African Union (the Framework). We reiterate that the evolving Framework should be conceived as the UN overall strategic framework for cooperation with the AU, and whose main objective should be to enhance the capacity of the AU Commission and African subregional organizations to act as effective UN partners in addressing the challenges to human security in Africa, focusing on the areas described in paragraph 6 below.

3. We reaffirm that the evolving Framework should cover all aspects of the cooperation between the UN and the AU, including but not limited to the following areas: peace and security (including crime prevention); assistance in institution building, and political and electoral matters; peacekeeping operations; governance, human rights and the rule of law; peace-building; humanitarian response, recovery and food security; social, cultural, and health issues; and the environment.

4. We recognize that the ongoing cooperation between the AU and the organizations of the UN system at the AU headquarters is the operational component of the evolving Framework.

5. We agree to align the support of the organizations of the UN system for New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) with the evolving Framework.

6. Our cooperation will continue to develop in a practical fashion, taking into account each organization's specific expertise and capabilities, and contributing to improving collaboration among all elements of the international community's response to the challenges on the African continent. We are also prepared to share best practices and lessons learned. In the context of the evolving Framework, we agree to give special emphasis to enhancing the AU's capacities in the following areas:

a) Institution-building, human resources development and financial management;
b) Peace and security;
c) Human rights;
d) Political, legal and electoral matters;
e) Social, economic, cultural and human development;
f) Food security and environmental protection.

7. We agree that existing cooperation arrangements between the organizations of the UN system and the AU will continue. In addition, new cooperation projects/programmes, as well as long-term partnership arrangements with the AU and the African sub-regional organizations, should be designed within/in the context of the evolving Framework and should be consistent with their specific mandates and area of competence.

8. We undertake to implement the ongoing and envisaged UN-AU cooperation programmes on the basis of the evolving Framework, the detailed Joint African Union-United Nations Action Plan for United Nations Assistance to the African Union Peacekeeping Capacity Building and all subsequent sectoral action plans.

9. We agree to periodically review the evolving Framework at three-year intervals.

Done at Addis Ababa, on 16 November 2006.

Kofi A. Annan
Secretary-General of the United Nations

Alpha Oumar Konaré
Chairperson of the African Union Commission